श्री शांता कुमार: सभापति महोदय, मैं स्वीकार कर रहा हूं कि अनाज खराब होता है। इसमें गेहूं का आंकड़ा 15 हजार टन है–15 हजार टन गेहूं नॉन ईश्युएबल है और 2 लाख 81 हजार टन चावल सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली में नॉन ईश्युएबल है। यह खराब हो गया है, इससे कोई इंकार नहीं है। खराब क्यों होता है, उसके बहुत से कारण हैं। इसका एक कारण तो यह है कि जब हमको प्रोक्योर करना होता है तब उसमें जो स्पेसिफिकेशन्स हैं, उनका ध्यान नहीं रखा जाता। कई बार स्पेसिफिकेशन्स जो हैं, उन्हें रिलैक्स करने के लिए मांग उठती है। वह मांग दबाव का रूप लेती है, वह मांग राजनीतिक दबाव का रूप लेती है और समय-समय पर स्पेसिफिकेशन्स बदली भी जाती रही हैं, उसके कारण भी उसकी गुणवत्ता में अंतर पड़ता है। और आज स्थिति यह है कि हमारे पास बहुत सा चावल ऐसा है जिसके बारे में प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री कहते हैं कि हमें यह चावल मत दीजिए। हमने पता किया कि इस चावल में गड़बड़ क्या है, तो जब लेना था तब उस समय इतना प्रेशर पड़ा कि आप स्पेसिफिकेशन्स बदल दीजिए, आप यह कर दीजिए , वह कर दीजिए। अब यह निर्णय किया गया है कि स्पेसिफिकेशन्स बिलकुल न बदली जाएं, गुणवत्ता के साथ कोई समझौता न किया जाए। एक कारण तो यह होता है। दूसरे, रखने में भी गलतियां होती हैं, कमियां होती हैं और पूरे प्रशासन की व्यवस्था में आचार, भ्रष्टाचार कितना है, यह कहने की जरूरत नहीं है। ये सारे कारण हैं और मैं स्वीकार करता हूं कि इन सारे कारणों को हमें ठीक करना है। मैं सदन को विश्वास दिलाता हूं कि जो भी कारण हैं, इनको हम ठीक करेंगे। ... **(व्यवधान)**

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: मंत्री जी कृपा करके बताएं कि भारतीय खाद्य निगम के कितने अधिकारियों को आपने दंडित किया है ?

श्री शांता कुमार: यह मेरे प्रश्न से संबंधित नहीं है। आप अलग प्रश्न करें, पूरा जवाब दिया जाएगा।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, a number of hon. Members want to put questions, it is better to have a half-an-hour discussion.

Proposals for Cultural Complexes in Assam

*182. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether two proposals for cultural complexes namely, Ban Theatre

at Tezpur in Sonitpur district and Gandhi Bhawan at Tihu in Kamrup district of Assam were considered for sanction by the Ministry;

(b) if so, the total outlays sanctioned year-wise, the progress of work and future provision made for those proposals; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Under the Scheme for setting up of Multi-Purpose Cultural Complexes for States including those for Children, only one Cultural Complex can be sanctioned per State. For Assam, a special complex called the Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra at Guwahati was set up, under the Assam Accord. The entire outlay of Rs. 18.85 crores was provided by the Government.

The Department sanctioned a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs to Ban Theatre for construction of its building under the Scheme for 'Building Grants to Cultural Organizations' of which Rs. 4.65 lakhs already stands released.

The request for construction of a Gandhi Bhawan, under the same Scheme, was considered by the Expert Committee but was not approved.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Sir, I thank the Minister for giving me this information regarding the completion of the Sankaradev Kalakshetra, as per Clause 6 of the Assam Accord. In this connection, Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister about the other schemes, under Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, to be implemented in Assam, especially the proposal for an international convention hall and, the proposal for preservation of the cultural heritage of Majuli Island, the worlds largest fresh water island, which has been maintaining a unique cultural heritage for the past five hundred years.

The second part is, in the reply, the hon. Minister has mentioned two schemes. One scheme is, construction of Ban Theatre in Tezpur district, which was sanctioned. A sum of Rs. 4.5 lakhs has already been relased. But so far as my information is concerned, the utilisation certificate for the earlier work was submitted by the concerned organisation nearly one year before. The second instalment has not been released. I would specifically request the

hon. Minister to take an initiative so that the remaining amount is released. The third part of my supplementary is that there was a proposal from the Gandhi Cultural Centre which has been rejected by the Experts Committee for the second time. I must say that it is a normal tendency either to delay or reject the proposals coming from the North-Eastern Region because the concerned organisations cannot come here and pursue the matter. On the basis of a flimsy ground, it was told by the Committee that the Gandhi Centre is not a cultural organisation. But it is a cultural organisation. It was formed in 1944 to commemorate the visit of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. This organisation has been in existence, operating and conducting a lot of cultural activities since then. I would specifically want to know from the hon. Minister whether he would take some action so that justice is done to these kinds of organisations.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, the recent initiative in the North-East is to establish a National School of Drama and the Indian Museums is taking up the work to have museums in various places like Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Assam. The Victoria Memorial is taking up the work relating to photographic exhibitions in Meghalaya, Sikkim and Mizoram. So, there are so many such initiatives. Secondly, in regard to the case of Ban Theatre, they have already released Rs. 4,65,000 in two instalments. The third instalment of grant amounting to Rs. 2,55,000 is being processed and will be released shortly. The remaining 20 per cent of the amount will be released after the completion of the construction of the Ban Theatre. Regarding another scheme relating to the case of Gandhi Bhavan at Thiu in Kamrup District, I would say that according to the memorandum that has been submitted by the Gandhi Bhavan, Thiru in Kamrup District, it is clear that it is not basically a cultural organisation. Therefore, their proposal has not been accepted. The hon. Minister has put a question regarding Majuli Island, which is a great centre of scenic and cultural value. I request the hon. Member to kindly speak to the hon. Minister of Environment and Forests so that once the Government of Assam gets the environmental clearance for developing that island, we will be more than interested.

SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Sir, the hon. Minister is asking the hon. Member to get in touch with the Minister of

Environment and Forests. Can the hon. Minister himself not pursue it with the Ministry of Environment and Forests?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, I take the advice of my dear friend, Pradhanji. I will also pursue the matter...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Thank you, Mr. Minister. At least, I can hope for something now...(*Interruptions*)... Sir, I am specifically concerned about the great cultural heritage that has been maintained in this island for about 500 years. In order to maintain this cultural value, I hope, the Government will take some specific measures to protect the cultural heritage of this island. The second part of my supplementary is regarding the Satriya form of dance of art and culture which was not declared as a classical dance by the Sangeet Natak Akademi earlier. When the Sangeet Natak Akademi declared other forms of dance such as Bharatanatayam, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Odissi, etc. as classical dances, at that time the Satriya form of dance was left out. Presently, the Sangeet Natak Akademi has abandoned the idea of declaring this as a classical form of dance. The Satriya dance has been deprived. I hope the hon. Minister will kindly impress upon the Sangeet Natak Akademi to review their decision so that the Satriya dance gets a national recognition, as a classical form of dance.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I will be more pleased to review the decision.

SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Culture whether there is any plan to cover the other culturally backward regions, with cultural complexes. As far as Punjab is concerned, though it has got the highest *per capita* income in the country, it has already lost the Patiala Gharana Music. Sir, Tappa, which used to be sung by Siddeshwari Devi and Krishnarao Shankar Pandit, is also dead. you cannot find this being sung in any Punjabi music programme. If you go to an average Punjabi house, you will find a television, a refrigerator, but never a bookshelf. Sir, I think, something has to be done for the culturally backward State like Punjab.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, though the supplementary does not purport to the main question, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the Department of Culture, Government of India, had undertaken many projects in 1998-99 for providing building grants. I can submit the list and I can lay

the same on the Table of the House. With regard to 'Tappa' of Punjab, I would like to submit that it does not purport to the main question.

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Sir, the hon. Minister, in his reply, stated that there was a request for the construction of Gandhi Bhavan. The same was considered by the Expert Committee, but it was not approved. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to at which level it was not approved, why was it not approved and whether the hon. Minister will take further action to get it approved. This is the first part of my supplementary.

The second part of my supplementary is, it is needless to mention that the North-Eastern sector is rich in cultural activity. In this context, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he has any special measures or programmes or plans to promote and preserve the culture especially, of the North-Eastern region. If yes; what are those?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, with regard to construction of Gandhi Bhavan, I would like to submit that the Expert Committee has considered the request made in its meeting held on 8th January, 1997, and again in December, 1998. But, as per the memorandum submitted by the Gandhi Bhavan, it does not, primarily, comes under the term 'cultural organization.' Therefore, the Committee felt that no grant should be sanctioned for its construction at Tihu, in Kamrup district.

With regard to the other question relating to promotional activities for culture and cultural development in the North-Eastern States, I would like to submit that many initiatives have been taken. I have aleady mentioned them. They are: having a national school of drama...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already read out those things.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Yes, Sir. I have already informed those things. Secondly, with regard to the North-Eastern States, we feel, the basic pedestal for promoting cultural heritage is the Archaeological Survey of India. Recently, I called a meeting to understand about the functioning of the A.S.I. Though it does not purport to the main question, I would like to inform the House that we are taking many measures to overhaul and professionalise the A.S.I.

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Sir, the Minister has already answered the question which I was intending to ask.